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# Building the hard core of professional sailors the human way

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GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

BUILDING THE HARD CORE OF  
PROFESSIONAL SAILORS  
THE HUMAN WAY

For

NAVY GRADUATE COMPTROLLERSHIP COURSE  
RESEARCH SEMINAR IN COMPTROLLERSHIP

Dr. A. Rex Johnson

January 11, 1956

Prepared By

Lucien B. McDonald  
Commander, U. S. Navy







## PREFACE

During the past two years at sea, one year as the executive officer of the U. S. S. Bushnell, a submarine tender, and the other year as the Commander of a Division of Submarines, I was thrown intimately and directly into a serious personnel problem. The dilemma facing the Navy today is how to build a hard core of professional sailors to fight the fleet. A very small percentage of the young intelligent men are reenlisting and rarely does a senior petty officer remain after twenty years of service. There are many reasons why this situation exists including heavy operating schedules, long absences from home, the gradual whittling away of fringe benefits by congress, the substantial monetary gains by labor compared to the lower pay of the Navy, and last but not least the military personnel management of the Navy.

In this paper I will explain why I think the military personnel management in the Navy is not what it should be, generally. There are exceptions, some ships and stations are models of mature, intelligent management, others are very poorly managed. The panacea for all substandard management in the Navy today seems to be better leadership, a very popular subject, it is being talked about by the Chief of Naval Operations, it is measured on each officer's fitness



report, books on it are required reading for promotion and it is universally a popular subject. I do not belittle the necessity for leadership or of its value, but I will point out that there is a facet of leadership that has been neglected, communications upward, and that there are several brands of leadership all of which are not now effective. I will emphasize democratic leadership.

Democratic leadership is a new twist to the philosophy of leadership in the Navy and to my knowledge not completely accepted or used in any military installation or ship. I have seen it used in part and have used to some extent the principles with great success. It is my firm belief that its application and use throughout the Navy will materially contribute to enticing young intelligent men to make the Navy their career. The practical job to be done is to put the Navy in a favorable bargaining position with industry for the best men. In the final analysis, the fleet is no better than the men who man it. Poor morale and second-rate men mean a second-rate Navy.

I am indebted to Dr. A. Rex Johnson who stimulated my thinking along the lines of human relations in the military service through his excellent course in human relations.



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

One very popular word in the Navy is "motivation". Whenever two personnel-conscious naval officers get together they begin "motivating" somebody to do or not to do something. While much has been learned about motivation, the ideal, that all human drives could be channeled toward a purpose, has not been realized. The exact process by which love, pride, sex, and pugnacity can be directed toward productive effort has not been discovered.<sup>1</sup> As the Navy's reenlistment rate clearly shows the ability to harness human drives to reenlist in the Navy is more an art than a science.

How then, if motivation cannot be controlled, are we to influence men to like the Navy well enough to reenlist? The first step should be, to make them as nearly satisfied as possible by reducing the conflicts and tensions in their everyday life on board the ships or station. Chris Argyris of the Yale University Labor and Management Center suggests that satisfied men are men with healthy personalities. He states that the man with the healthy personality is one who is well adapted to his environment

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<sup>1</sup>William H. Knowles, Personnel Management (New York: American Book Company, 1955), p. 64.



and internally adjusted.<sup>1</sup>

The problem, therefore, resolves into the task of developing healthy personalities in a majority of men, if possible. A practical and useable description is extremely complex but in the material below, I have attempted to give its flavors, as self-respect, the feeling of security, self-knowledge, self-expression, contact with reality, a balance between independence and dependence, and goal setting and achievement.

Self-respect is confidence in our personality, self-tolerance, and self-love. As Eric Fromm suggests:

If it is a virtue to love my neighbor as a human being, it must be a virtue, and not a vice, to love myself since I am a human being too. There is no concept of man in which I, myself, am not included. The idea expressed in the Biblical 'Love thy neighbor as thyself' implies that respect for one's own integrity and uniqueness, love for and understanding of one's own self cannot be separated from respect for and love and understanding of another individual. The love for my own self is inseparably connected with the love for any other self.<sup>2</sup>

To differentiate between self-love and selfishness Fromm writes:

Selfishness and self-love, far from being identical are actually opposites. The selfish person does not

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<sup>1</sup>Chris Argyris, Personality Fundamentals For Administrators (New Haven: Yale University Labor and Management Center, 1953), p. 109.

<sup>2</sup>Eric Fromm, Man For Himself (New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1947), p. 128- p. 129.



love himself too much but too little; in fact he hates himself. This lack of fondness and care of himself, leaves him empty and frustrated. He is necessarily unhappy and anxiously concerned to snatch from life the satisfactions which he blocks himself from attaining. He seems to care too much for himself but actually he only makes an unsuccessful attempt to cover up and compensate for his failure to care for his real self. It is true that selfish persons are incapable of loving others, but they are not capable of loving themselves either.<sup>1</sup>

A man who has lost his self-respect is not a useful person in society and his presence on board a ship is most detrimental to the goal of motivating men to reenlist.

The feeling of security is used as a feeling of belonging to the organization not to the need for financial security. The need to be needed describes a very significant fact about people. Everyone wants to feel that what he does makes a difference to someone else. He has a genuine need to believe that in addition to earning money to support his family or his appetite for pleasures he is making a worthwhile contribution to something of substance and importance. Everyone wants recognition but more satisfaction is received and it is more desirable if it results from the knowledge that he has really achieved something.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 131.

<sup>2</sup>W. W. Finlay, A. Q. Sartain, Willis M. Tate, Human Behavior In Industry (New York: McGraw-Hill Co., 1954), p. 28.



There is grave danger that some men in the Navy may regard themselves as insignificant because they are assigned unimportant tasks and they cannot identify themselves with any practical goal or value. A man must feel wanted by his own people, by his own shipmates and by the Navy. He must feel "at home" in the world in which he lives. In his group, the individual should be encouraged by loyalties that are mutually satisfying.

Self-knowledge is the first step to understanding and getting along with others. One of the most important facts about the individual is his feelings and thoughts about who he is, where he is, what he is, and why he is. Every man carries around in himself a picture which he will go to great extremes to keep satisfactory and to try to improve.<sup>1</sup> A healthy person, therefore, tries to recognize the limitations in himself and others. Each officer or petty officer should be encouraged to attempt to know himself in order that he may understand others around him.

Self-expression should be spontaneous from a relaxed man. He needs a sense of humor to be able to rebound from the inevitable tenseness and frustrations of military life. He must be able to smile and laugh freely. This may best be injected by the example of the leaders.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.



Contact with reality is important. There exist two worlds, the objective and the subjective. The former is the world people admit exists and the latter, the subjective or "private" world, is a man's personal view of the objective world. Only by understanding both worlds is he able to make allowances in his own dealings with people and to understand other's views. He is then better equipped to withstand the ordinary shocks of life, by tending to live realistically, free from fantasy, day dreaming, or wishful thinking. To accept reality is to feel responsible for our actions, for a man to know he is wrong is to be right.

A balance of the independence and dependence in a man is his ability to cooperate and still be independent; it is the ability to follow as well as to lead depending upon the situation. Balance is the important point and is particularly useful and necessary in the armed services.

Goal-setting and achievement are important ingredients of life. All individuals are constantly seeking to be possessed of a sense of worthwhileness. The wish for worth is tremendously strong. People want to register, to count, to be identified and acknowledged as individuals. Each of us carries about an image of the self to which each refers in making choices in life, and when others treat us in a way to deny or belittle the image the result is



resentment, defense, resistance, and in extreme cases hate and violence.<sup>1</sup> The goals should fulfill inner needs and be high enough to make a person put up a fight but just weak enough to be finally overcome.<sup>2</sup>

Lippitt and Bradford suggest that people who feel psychologically successful tend to:

1. Raise their goals.
2. Gain greater confidence in their ability in the activity.
3. Increase their persistence to future goals.
4. Increase their ability to cooperate and work.
5. Increase their ability to adapt readily to new situations.
6. Increase their emotional control.

No one can deny that even partial achievement of the above six behavior tendencies would greatly facilitate Navy management.<sup>3</sup>

Some may ask why it is necessary to worry about healthy personalities when all that is necessary is to use

<sup>1</sup>F. Ordway Tead, The Art of Administration (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1951), p. 46.

<sup>2</sup>Chris Argyris, Personality Fundamentals For Administrators (New Haven: Yale University Labor and Management Center, 1953), pp. 109-115.

<sup>3</sup>Ronald Lippitt and Leland Bradford, "Employee Success in Work Group", Personnel Administration, III (December 1945), 6-10.



just plain common sense. Common sense answers are answers based primarily on one individual's attempt to explain certain problems using a background of his own experience. Consequently, common sense answers are limited by scientific standards. The supposedly common sense sayings people use so often imply that the lesson expressed is the truth. For example,

1. "Repeat a lie frequently enough and people will believe it."
2. "Clothes make a man."
3. "You can't teach an old dog new tricks."
4. "Out of sight, out of mind."

All of these phrases have been used as common sense arguments at one time or another. They express "truths" that have weathered the "years of hard knocks". But for every truth above "common sense" supplies us with a contradictory "truth".

1. "The truth will always prevail."
2. "You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear."
3. "Never too old to learn."
4. "Absence makes the heart grow fonder."

The second reason for the limitation of common sense answers are the following scientific facts:

1. We tend to look at our social world through a set



of colored spectacles.

2. We have a habit of wanting practical results rather than objective data in any situation.

3. We affect the very situation which we want to observe.<sup>1</sup>

This adds up to the fact that common sense answers are exactly what a person wants to believe are correct answers for a given problem.<sup>2</sup>

In summary, the military manager must be aware of the complexity of the human personality and the unreliability of using common sense. In the Navy there are certain so-called common sense truths, "A taut ship is a happy ship" and "In every ship there must be at least one S.O.B", that are used and applied ineptly and indiscriminately. In reply to these so-called truths the mature Navy manager should ask himself the following questions, "How do you make a taut ship happy?", and "What is the quickest way to get rid of the S.O.B.?" If the use of common sense is so inept, what, then, should be the method of tackling a problem in human relations? In answering my own question,

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<sup>1</sup>Lowell J. Carr, Situational Analysis (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948), p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Chris Argyris, Personality Fundamentals For Administrators (New Haven: Yale University Labor and Management Center, 1953), pp. 4-5.



the first step is to realize that the problem by its very nature is complex and requires careful thought. A quick decision may be worse than no decision. The next step is to try to understand the relationship between the problem and the human personality needs, the need for self-respect, the need for a feeling of security, the need for self-knowledge, the need for self-expression, the need for contact with reality, and the need for a feeling of achievement. When you feel you know juniors' views and feelings on the problem and you know all of the material facts, look at your own prejudices, values and feelings and try to compensate for the bias in your decision-making. Self awareness acts like the "Kentucky windage" a marksman uses when, for some reason, he knows that the sights on his rifle are not accurate.<sup>1</sup>

Dean Donham of Harvard University approaches the problem from a slightly different way. His ten simple rules are quoted:

1. Learn all about a problem before trying to solve it. Listen a lot, talk a little.
2. See the total situation. Don't act on just part of it.
3. Don't be deceived by logic. Most problems are full of emotion. Emotions aren't logical.
4. Watch the meaning of words. Look behind words to get their full impact.

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<sup>1</sup>Chris Argyris, "Human Relations In A Bank", Harvard Business Review, (September-October 1953).



5. No moral judgments, please. Until you have diagnosed a problem, don't leap to conclusions about what is right and what is wrong.
6. Imagine yourself in the other fellows shoes. See how the problem looks from where he sits.
7. When a problem gets you down, get away from it. Put it in the back of your mind for a week. When you approach it again, the solution may be obvious.
8. Ask yourself, "What are the forces acting upon the other fellow?" and "Why does he behave as he does?"
9. Diagnosis must come before action. Use the doctor's approach. Don't prescribe until you are sure what is wrong.
10. Easy does it. Quick solutions are often the quick route to trouble. Take your time.



## CHAPTER II

### THE SHOTGUN WEDDING

The Selective Service Law has forced the marriage of the philosophy of modern labor and the generally accepted policy and philosophy of military personnel management in the Navy. The resolution is a conflict and a frustration that helps to drive the youths from the Navy at the first opportunity. I do not mean to infer that all youths are driven out or that no one in the Navy other than myself understands the techniques of modern management. Generally speaking, most of the young men are not motivated to make the Navy a career and the average naval officer in a policy position or in command of a ship is too busy with daily operating chores to take the necessary time to think through a complex human relations problem and they are not willing to accept the fact that there has been a basic change in management philosophy. One of the easiest things for anybody to do is to live in the midst of a social change and still be hardly aware that it is going on.<sup>1</sup> In support of this incompatible marriage, there follows a brief picture of the average top level Navy manager, and

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<sup>1</sup>W. W. Finlay, A. Q. Sartain, Willis M. Tate, Human Behavior in Industry (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1954), p. 59.



a brief description of the changes in labor and management relations yet to be fully realized in the Navy.

The policy and top level management of the Navy is centered in the regular naval officers between the ages of about thirty-five and fifty-five of the ranks of admiral, captain and commander. These are the men who have the authority to change regulations, to act on ideas that come from below and to set the tone of management. These men received their education prior to World War II. Throughout the war years they were at sea in combat service or in shore billets concentrating on technical problems of logistics or of training men to promote the war effort. They were aware of the social changes that this country was undergoing, but hardly concerned, except as it directly affected them. All knew that unions were becoming influential, but they were not really interested in the meaning of the movement. Even industry itself was unconscious of the future impact these developments would bring.

The climate provided by the Roosevelt era combined with the full employment during the war and the gaining of strength by the labor unions accelerated the change in the relationship between management and the worker. The worker could no longer be treated as a commodity; he was now organized and could talk back to management. The forty hour week was enforced by an act of



Congress.

Had there been nothing wrong with the management technique in industry, pre-war and during the war, labor unions would have been unable to make the tremendous gains they made. Industry's full occupation with everyday operating problems and labor's patriotic motivation to help win the war prevented industrial strife. However, in 1946 and 1947 there was a great revival of labor unrest and strife. At this time industry began seriously to inquire into the causes. The improvement of management techniques was one of the obvious answers and something could be done about it.

Where, then, were our naval leaders during this period? They were working at sea and ashore, but because of the insulation of the officer corps both in everyday life and out-of-hours social life from civilian society, these leaders failed to realize the effect of the victories of the working man in all industries and institutions that compete for labor.<sup>1</sup> Certainly they read about the changes in the press, but because of the great resistance to change and the fact that

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<sup>1</sup>A. K. Davis, "Bureaucracy in The Navy", Human Relations in Industry, ed. Robert Dubin (New York: Prentice Hall 1948), p. 278.



the Navy is a giant bureaucracy which when confronted with a problem becomes confused,<sup>1</sup> the top management did not and could not without great drive make the necessary changes in naval personnel administration. Personnel policy today at all levels of the Navy is formulated and executed with very little insight into the actual changes in the character of the men with whom they are dealing. In the seventeen years active naval service of the writer, not once has he seen or heard discussed in a wardroom any of the modern writings on management, even though the U. S. Navy is one of the largest institutions in the world with a crying need for the most expert and intelligent management. Technical competence has been the goal of the officers at the expense of management "know-how".

Sometimes, incredulously artless methods are used to accomplish an end. The Navy since the end of the last war has been trying to reestablish the military custom of saluting. In this instance the commanding officer of a destroyer received a directive from his superiors to raise the standard of military courtesy, particularly saluting. When communications down failed to obtain results, he resorted to a practice of requiring each man in

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<sup>1</sup>William H. Knowles, Personnel Management (New York: American Book Company, 1955), p. 141.



the crew to salute an officer before he was eligible to go ashore on liberty.<sup>1</sup> In the Navy there is no system whereby the men can safely object without reprisal except at captain's mast, and if the captain, as in this case, was the perpetrator, what man in his right mind would complain. Very few schemes of this type are established on board a naval ship without the knowledge and the approval of the commanding officer.

To a large Naval Base, the Secretary of the Navy reputedly sent an admiral "to straighten out" the place following some bad publicity by a sensational columnist, Drew Pearson. Among other things, the admiral established a curfew for all naval personnel after 2:30 AM. The curfew was of no particular hardship on anyone, but there was no clearcut reason for it. Maybe the admiral knew, but he failed to communicate his reasons to the naval personnel who were involved. The point is that a responsible naval commander can be so inept in failing to prepare the ground before restricting the rights of individuals. Needless to say, the order was carried out grudgingly, it produced nothing but contempt for the commander, and was a negative incentive to reenlist in the

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with CDR. Paul Adams, U. S. Navy, December 12, 1955.



Navy. I haven't heard of the admiral's new schemes in his new job, but I imagine he is applying the same faulty human relations technique.

Many people contend that the military service is different from any other type of institution in the requirements for strict obedience and blind following. In the Navy intelligent participation is absolutely necessary for every man and consequently intelligent mature direction is required. The adherents to the extreme authoritarian view of management are bound for failure, because the men that provide the bulk of the Navy grew up in a period of dynamic change in the relationship between those who work and those who direct the work. The life long training and environmental effects of a majority of these young men cannot be changed in a few short years. They can be made to conform to a system but it is difficult to make them choose the Navy as a career.

The structural changes in society in the United States greatly accelerated by the war, that influence the character of our modern youth, are the restriction of immigration, the broadening of educational opportunities, the decline in relative importance of agriculture, and the increased government regulation of labor relations.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>William H. Knowles, Personnel Management (New York: American Book Company, 1955), pp. 16-20.



With the end of large scale immigration, there came a limiting of the labor supply. At the present time immigration is generally restricted to Mexican and West Indian labor for the industrialized agriculture of California and Florida. No longer can industry solve their labor problems simply by increasing the labor supply. The Navy, too, is now forced into competition by scarcity.

The new immigrants who came to this country during the period of large scale industrialization were not in a position to make demands on their employers. They were in a strange land with strange customs, they spoke a strange language, and after all, working conditions in the United States were better than where they came from. The bargaining power of labor was extremely weak, because of the continuing excess of the labor supply over the available jobs. Workers were easily replaced by new arrivals from Europe.

Related to immigration is the fact that labor is increasingly better educated. A generation ago the average worker went through grade school, today he has a high school education. As a result he demands to be treated with dignity and respect and he knows his legal rights. Whether we like this fact or not it exists, it must be recognized, and relations between management and the worker must be governed accordingly. To emphasize this change it



must be remembered that only a short time ago immigrant labors were considered sub-human and abuses were justified on the grounds that they had baser appreciations than management and they had substandard desires. With the increased education and intelligence of the workers and sailors in the Navy, the more complicated the management problems.

The third significant change is the declining importance of agriculture in this country. Heretofore, the small property holders with minor social and economic problems had a stabilizing force in the nations politics and in the continuous struggle between industry and labor. Now the urban population predominates and the great masses of Americans sell their labor for wages. Until relatively recently the rural youths eager to work hard and take orders willingly and unquestioningly were the source of labor. With the population shift mentioned above, labor and the Navy recruit from second and third generation city dwellers who are deeply imbued with the philosophy of working man.

Ten to fifteen years ago unions were confined to the building trades, railroads and smaller competitive industries. Union organizers have now successfully organized the mass production industries. This new look of industrial relations was brought about by the political climate



of the "New Deal", the depression and by the change in character of the employees themselves. Life aptly summarizes this change:

From its bloody beginnings U. S. labor has in less than a century made progress as dramatic as the change from horse and carriage to jet transport. Labor's top leaders today are as skilled executives drawing sizable salaries, living in gracious homes and working in posh offices as impressive as anything their management counterparts can boast. Their unions have thousands of members and millions of dollars in assets, including headquarters and other real estate. In contrast to the bitter anticapitalism of the past most union leaders now espouse and play a role as partners in capitalism.<sup>1</sup>

The fourth major change influencing our youth is the evaluation of the position of government in labor management. Not too long ago the courts were very effective in nullifying labor laws, but recently the laws have been upheld as the expression of public policy. For years strikes, boycotts, and picketing were of questionable legality. Of late the courts have modified the basic ideas of private property rights and freedom of contract by recognizing the rights of labor to strike, boycott, and picket. Labor is politically minded and consolidating its forces rapidly. Recent developments of labor legislation and proposed legislation have kept labor management relations in a state of flux. Navy management

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<sup>1</sup> "New Affluence, Unity for Labor", Life, December 12, 1955, p.26.



philosophy must be flexible and willing to adapt and change with the laws, customs and labor policy, if the Navy is ever to be a volunteer organization again.

In summary, the vast size of the Navy, the very nature of a bureaucracy, and the insulation of naval officers from society result in conservative out of date personnel management. A few astute officers in the Bureau of Naval Personnel are fully aware of the situation and the remedies but are unable to interest the vast majority of navy managers in changing.<sup>1</sup>

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that increased education, the decline in the importance of agriculture, the restriction of immigration and the favorable government climate toward labor will continue to exercise a tremendous influence on labor relations and on naval management. You just don't order the modern American around successfully for very long. He has a lot of ideas about how much he knows about his freedom and worth and you neglect them at your own peril. One of the biggest limitations in supervising people is to fail to take into account the great changes that the recent past has brought about in them. Thus, we try to supervise the 1955 model

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with W. J. Ruhe, Commander U. S. N., Bureau of Naval Personnel, November 9, 1955.



of American worker or sailor as though he were a 1940 model, a 1935 model or even a 1925 model. Most Navy managers have been making the same mistakes every year since 1935. We might not like this year's model of the American sailor as well as we liked last year's or that of some previous year, but this year's model is the model that is out and it is the model we will have to live with, like it or not.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>W. W. Finlay, A. Q. Sartain, Willis M. Tate, Human Behavior in Industry (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1954), p. 69.



## CHAPTER III

### DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP

Leadership is an all inclusive term indicating control from the extreme autocratic variety, highly centralized to the democratic variety, in the hands of the people. There are all degrees of each type of control and one fades off into the other. The use of democratic methods does not mean that the workers are called together to vote on each problem that arises. A distinction must be drawn between problems requiring knowledge and expert opinion and those involving attitudes and feelings. At times the supervisor may act in the capacity of an expert to provide expert opinion.<sup>1</sup> The same methods should be effective in the Navy. With the task identified as one of leading the 1955 model sailor who is intelligent, fully aware of the newly won rights of the working man, and a product of democratic environment, the best leadership assumes a democratic character rather than the character of unilateral suggestion. The leader should not demand obedience without explanation, if he is in a position to let his followers see the reasons for his decisions. He should not arbitrarily make demands upon the followers as to the details of action, rather he should invite initiative and encourage cooperation

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<sup>1</sup>J. Stanley Gray, Psychology in Industry (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1952), p. 340.



instead of sub-operation. His modus operandi should be to set the problem, to exhibit means for solution known to the leader, and to ask his subordinates to carry on from there.<sup>1</sup>

This changing world has made necessary this new democratic leadership philosophy, one that is difficult for most people to accept, but I believe most urgent for each manager in the Navy to understand, particularly the officers in the policy and command positions who are so influential in setting the leadership climate. Generally speaking, the guideposts of this new leadership philosophy are: In the final analysis, people are basically responsible to themselves and they alone can tell themselves what to do. The leader should allow his men to keep this responsibility. Practically all men want to be mature, to be socially accepted, to feel that they belong to a group, and to feel that they are needed. The leader will utilize these basic desires to help him understand and lead his men and not on the powers given him by the organization. Best performance and genuine loyalty can effectively be created in a warm congenial atmosphere in which the individuals feel free to bring out any attitudes and feelings they may have, no matter how unconventional, absurd, or contradictory

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<sup>1</sup>E. G. Boring(ed.), Psychology For the Armed Services (Washington: The Infantry Journal, 1945), p.414.



they may be. In the Navy the reverse is usually true. The leader tries to get across to all that he accepts them as individuals and that his acceptance does not involve either approval or disapproval of their feelings, values, and needs. Such a leadership philosophy minimizes such leadership roles as "pusher", "aggressor" or "mover" and emphasizes roles such as "helper", "supporter", "clarifier" and "encourager".<sup>1</sup>

Further clarification of the distinction between authoritarian and Democratic organization and control is shown by the following comparison:

Authoritarian: All policies are determined by a few individuals, sometimes by a single individual.

Democratic: Policies affecting the worker are a matter of group discussion and decision under the guidance and direction of leaders.

Authoritarian: Techniques and policies are dictated by management as the need arises.

Democratic: Techniques and developments are planned for ahead of the time when they are put into effect. The group is aware of the future plans and has had a voice in the development of such plans.

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<sup>1</sup>Chris Argyris, Executive Leadership (New York: Harper Brothers, 1953), pp. 111-112.



**Authoritarian:** The leaders dictate the work tasks, schedules, changes etc.

**Democratic:** The work tasks, schedule, and conditions of work are discussed with employees. They are given an opportunity to express their feelings and their ideas.

**Authoritarian:** The leaders are personal in their praise and rewards, oftentimes showing favoritism based upon cooperation with management.

**Democratic:** Praise, rewards, and criticism are given on the basis of merit. Practices and policies will be consistent with the feelings and aspirations of the group.

**Authoritarian:** Information concerning the policies, operations, and plans for the future is given out to the extent that management considers such information will promote good morale and increase efficiency.

**Democratic:** Information concerning the policies, operations, and plans for the future is made known to the employees, and discussion and study groups are formed for making special recommendations.<sup>1</sup>

The vast size of the Navy makes true democratic leadership in all areas of operations and control impractical, but, in general, where the feelings and attitudes

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<sup>1</sup>J. Stanley Gray, Psychology in Industry (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1952), p. 342.



of the men are involved every effort to utilize the new democratic type of leadership should be made. The cut of the jaw, the swagger, the clothes, or the superficial, do not make leadership. Usually it is the obvious human qualities in a man that make other men respect him.<sup>1</sup>

One common pitfall that I have observed in the Navy in the art of leadership is the paternalistic philosophy of deciding what is and what is not good for men without regard to the thoughts of the men concerned to accomplish some end. Unfortunately this attitude can and does change very easily into a condition of ego inflation, which the leader derives from his altruistic virtue, and bears little relation to what his followers really want. In such situations the leader is essentially more concerned to enhance his own self-righteousness than to be useful to others.<sup>2</sup> In the military with no profit motive, the reputation of an officer with his seniors can be greatly influenced by the actions of the men serving under him. Consequently the officer is supersensitive about the activities of the men that might reflect on him. This leads to a variety of misunderstandings and restrictions.

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<sup>1</sup>William B. Given, Bottom-up Management (New York: Harper Brothers, 1948), p. 93.

<sup>2</sup>Ordway Tead, The Art of Leadership (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1935), p.228.



In the Submarine Force Atlantic Fleet in 1948, the commanding officer of a ship was required to explain in writing to the admiral, whenever more than two of his crew were arrested by the shore patrol in any one month. This resulted in many restrictions on the crews to prevent the commanding officers from unfavorable scrutiny in the eyes of his superiors. This type of action violates an important working principle for human relations, that the officer making the decision must try to see the impact down the line.

There is a strong feeling in the Navy today that everything would be wonderful if we could turn back the clock to the "good old days" before the war when there was no reenlistment problem and a waiting list of men trying to get in the service. There was a very low turnover but this did not necessarily mean high job enthusiasm. Obviously, if there is widespread unemployment and a buyers market for labor, the low turnover may have nothing to do with the way the men felt about the Navy.<sup>1</sup> The facts of the situation may be that the men were happy to stay in the Navy because working conditions and industrial relations were even more primitive in industry. Not so today,

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<sup>1</sup>Carl Heyel, How to Create Job Enthusiasm (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1942), p. 29.



under the heading of "What You Can Expect of DuPont" the E. I. DuPont De Nemours and Company writes this to their employees:

There are several reasons why people work. The primary reason of course is to obtain food, clothing, and shelter for themselves and their families. But as Americans with the highest standard of living, we are not satisfied with just basic necessities. We want of course a fair rate of pay, but that alone is not enough. We want a good work place, with proper lighting, ventilation, and safe working conditions. We want to work for a good supervisor, who is well trained for his job and who appreciates the individual worker. We want congenial working relations with our associates, and we want to be treated as important and necessary members of the work team. We want to feel that merit and ability will bring advancement as opportunities arise, and to feel a sense of security in our work...Dupont is trying to provide these essentials of satisfactory employment...Employee relations policies have been developed with these requirements in mind.<sup>1</sup>

The top command of the Navy could very profitably publish to everyone an aim that could be related to everyday work that is not so lofty as the responsibilities set forth in the Key West agreement. Something that each man could understand and believe and would clarify the personnel management aims of the Navy. For example, the published aim of the American Brake Shoe Corporation is:

to make our company a better place to work, a better neighbor in the community, a better company to sell to, a better company to buy from, and a better company to invest in.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>E. I. DuPont De Nemours and Co., Working With DuPont-A Handbook for Employees (Wilmington, Del., 1954), p. 22.

<sup>2</sup>William B. Given, Jr., Bottom-up Management (New York: Harper Brothers, 1948), p. 41.



There is no warmth in Navy management, it is an impersonal, cold bureaucracy.

Another example of confusing policy, is failure to recognize a man's family as being an important part of the Navy morale. In some cases, mountains are virtually moved to help some unfortunate dependent and in other cases, the policy is to ignore the wife. The private aspirations and responsibilities of each and every man should be recognized.<sup>1</sup> The theory is that if the wife is loyal to the Navy and is proud of her husband and his job, it is easier for the man to put himself whole-heartedly into his work. The home and the job overlap, a man lives his home in his job and his job in his home. It is proving a very difficult chore to reenlist the man whose wife is not willing to invest her life in the Navy.

A word of caution at this time seems appropriate. The theories of democratic leadership are sound and with continuing social change will become even more necessary for satisfied efficient men. However, with more than one-hundred and fifty years of autocratic leadership and social caste as traditions in the Navy, revolutionary change is impractical and impossible. There must, however, be an understanding of this philosophy of leadership and an

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<sup>1</sup>William B. Given, Jr., Reaching Out in Management (New York: Harper Brothers, 1949), p.40.



acceptance depending on the abilities of the managers. It should be manifested first in the everyday working relations on board ship in the various routines. For example, an excellent place to start would be for the Commander-in-Chief to remove from his regulation book the rigid requirements for maintaining a watch. Let the Commanding Officer of the ship, who ultimately is responsible, through democratic leadership workout a suitable watch-standing schedule. I would venture a guess that the result would be considerably different from that prescribed by the Commander-in-Chief, and be more economical in the use of manpower, yet as efficient. The maintaining of the social difference between officers and enlisted men is a difficult idea to blend with the idea of democratic leadership. Theoretically there should be no status, the Navy personnel should be all egalitarians, but people do not react that way. It is the ambiguity of status and not overemphasis that is most provoking, one has only to think of the subtle probing of two strangers to find out where each fits in.<sup>1</sup> In order to attract and hold the caliber of man necessary to maintain first-rate Naval Officers, the higher social status must be made possible either through higher pay or through officers' clubs and other privileges. The purpose of

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<sup>1</sup>"Communication Problems of the Front Office", Fortune, May 1951.



this study is to find ways whereby the Navy can compete with industry for manpower on a little bit better than even basis, not to create the ultimate utopia in labor management harmony.



## CHAPTER IV

### COMMUNICATION

In the dealing with the new management problems brought about by recent social change, the naval leaders must become aware of their increased responsibility for understanding, developing, and coordinating as opposed to directing groups of men engaged in many activities. To accomplish this, communications play a vital part in the operations of an efficient organization. Communications is closely related to human relations since most personal relationships are carried on through some form of communications, verbal or written. The Navy is very efficient in downward communications, the ships and stations are all but suffocated with orders, policies, and plans necessary for the operation and maintenance of the world's largest Navy. This downward flow is extremely important even though some people complain of the vast number of papers they must peruse. Lack of information or misinformation results in misunderstandings. The large and adequate flow of information fosters a pride in the Navy man's work and enjoyment. It improves his morale and stature as an individual by instilling a feeling of belonging. Downward communications are an integral part of the organization and are readily accepted and made use of more or less effectively by the Navy.

Communications generally in the Navy are recognized as a one-way street. Many naval men feel that as



managers they are responsible for formulation of plans at their level and for issuing directives that put the plan into effect. They believe that it is the responsibility of others to carry out these directives and fail to see the value of encouraging juniors to participate. They do not provide clear, unobstructed, channels for funneling information, opinions, and attitudes up through the organization. Good communications are a process that flow upward, downward and laterally through the organization.

Communication in industry as well as the Navy is an important problem. How often have you heard questions such as: Why is the lower-level interpretation of objectives, policies, and procedures frequently so different from top-level intentions? Why does it take so long to have policies understood and executed at the working level? Can't people read or hear the orders they have been given? What can be done to speed up the whole process of communications?<sup>1</sup>

Since downward communications are thoroughly developed in the Navy, there remains then another important direction of communications to examine, upward.

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<sup>1</sup>Edmund P. Learned, David N. Ulrich, and Donald R. Booz, Executive Action (Andover, Massachusetts: The Andover Press, Ltd., 1951), p.6.



What then can be said of its value? To the manager, it is through unobstructed upward communications that he is able to determine how effective are his directives. Many orders are sown on dry and barren soil because the issuance was poorly timed and the manager was unaware that the recipients were not ready to receive the order nor would they accept the order.

For a commander to gain full acceptance and understanding of decisions, his subordinates should be permitted to discuss the pros and cons of the decisions if practical. Appreciation and loyalty, by the very nature of man, results from self-expression. Superiors should encourage the asking of questions and solicit ideas. They should listen sincerely and sympathetically with the intention of using workable ideas.

Upward communications are necessary if the officers are to learn whether the men are getting the meaning intended by downward communications. Some downward communications are ambiguous, but the fault is rarely discovered without good upward communications. Juniors see directives in the light of their own biases and experience. Without upward communications, the seniors are never sure of the interpretations and reactions of the juniors.

If any ideas of value are to be solicited and offered, there must be free upward communications to



motivate the juniors to take the trouble to submit the ideas.

To the subordinate, upward communications help to satisfy the basic human need of personal worth. Personal worth is always injured when people do not have a chance to express their ideas. The subordinate's dignity is respected only when he is invited to express his reactions to what he is told.

Upward communications provide a release of emotional tension and pressure which would otherwise dissipate itself through criticism of the authority and the resulting discontent and loss of efficiency.

The Navy by its very nature is authoritarian. It follows, that it is imperative in matters where subordinates participate, that we be more democratic. Nothing is more fundamental to democracy than upward communications in which the ideas of subordinates are given prompt and sympathetic hearing, followed by such action as is desirable.

The mere stating that upward communications are essential for good management, and the actual adopting, is an entirely different thing. There are multitudinous barriers that act as blocks to the upward flow that must be recognized as being inherent in the temperament and habits of supervisors. Some of the barriers to upward communications are discussed below.



The universal feeling in the Navy that the admirals in Washington do not know what is going on in the fleet is a failure of upward communications. The physical distance between Washington and the ships and stations is great and the admirals rarely come face to face with the people involved. Communications are virtually impossible because of the inaccessibility.

The complexity of the channels and the dilution of the information distorts an upward communication to such an extent that there is usually small resemblance to the original thought, particularly if the nature of the communication is a complaint or reflection on anyone in the organization. As the communication passes up the hierarchy of the organization, the contact between the various levels of supervision becomes fewer and more hurried and less attention is given to it.

The most formidable barriers to communications are the blocks introduced into channels by the superior himself. If the boss seems too busy, or preoccupied with other work, or impatient, or annoyed, or distressed, this attitude will place an insurmountable communication barrier between them in the future.

Sometimes the boss is lulled into a false sense of security by thinking that "no news is good news" where actually upward communications have been squeezed down to



ineffectiveness. He may delude himself into thinking he knows what his juniors are thinking or maybe he is the type of person who thinks he is being disloyal to the organization to listen to juniors' complaints, particularly if they are intemperately made. This attitude makes upward communications most difficult.

If the boss is the type who is unable to stand criticism and is naturally defensive about his actions, the good employees will spare him the displeasure of information that is not complimentary or good news. For the manager this is the type of information he needs the most because it may forestall a major crisis in the future.

Some supervisors resist becoming involved in personal problems of juniors. This effectively closes part of his communication channel up, because job problems and personal problems are often closely linked and it is difficult to discuss one without the other.

The amount of time a man spends on communications reflects the man's philosophy of management. A manager who has freed himself of much of his routine responsibilities and is engaged in building individual subordinates and developing teamwork in his group will rank communications high in priority and will allow time for it, since it is the nerve center of such a leader's management. In contrast, the boss who acts alone, usually gets his problems



complex and explosive, and fails to act on undesirable conditions previously brought to his attention, receives no communications from below, and is usually so busy "putting out fires" he doesn't have time to communicate.

In the Navy there is no mechanism for the appeal of the decision of a superior other than a legal decision. The subordinate does not have the freedom to communicate which the senior has. Very few men will grossly intrude on the superior's time.

There is no real incentive by the subordinate to communicate up. There are rewards, promotions and praise for those who carry out downward communications as well as penalties for those who fail to act.

Communication from subordinate to superior cannot be as well-prepared as the downward flow which is carefully thought out by a staff, strengthened by research, careful writing, editing, and visual aids. And because of tradition and authority behind communications down, they flow more easily that way than up. The semantic barrier for the junior is greater, he is attempting to communicate an idea to a person whose work and responsibilities are different. The junior must gain acceptance from one of greater status and authority, and he may be handicapped by being less fluent than the downward communicator.

Unless seniors are particularly receptive, juniors



have a tendency to hold back bad news, unfavorable reports, and reports of mistakes and failures. Information will be withheld under these circumstances by fear, dislike, indifference, or because superiors are defensive about listening to bad news, and omissions and errors are minimized by friendly motives.

Assuming then, that for good administration and satisfied sailors and officers, communications must be a two-way street, and that there are many obstacles that get in the way of upward communications, the reader may ask what sort of information should be communicated up? Generally the good Navy manager wants to know matters that fall into four general categories:

1. How juniors feel about the Navy, their work and about their associates.
2. What the juniors are doing, their achievements and their progress.
3. What ideas juniors may have for improvements within the Navy.
4. Information on areas of difficulty or future difficulty.

The area that is most barren in the Navy is the juniors' thoughts and feelings about the Navy, their jobs, and their shipmates and associates in the Navy. The reason this is true is because this is the area in which most



Navy managers think they know the most, since everyone lives on board the same ship, all eat the same, and all have the same experiences. In reality though this is the area in which they know the least, because real feelings do not spontaneously flow up because of the barriers mentioned above and because little real effort is exerted to find the answers. Some of the questions to be understood are spelled out below:

1. Are enlisted men and junior officers satisfied with their pay in relation to similar jobs in industry? How do you know? What have you done to find out?

2. Is the watchstanding felt to be reasonable? From whom did you get the information?

3. Do the officers and sailors feel the workload is fairly distributed? What positive evidence have you of this?

4. What the men think about the habitability of the ship? Do they tell you this?

5. Is there confusion as to who is to do what? Is authority clearly stated and understood, particularly between junior officers, chief petty officers, senior petty officers and division officers? On what do you base your opinions? Is it more than wishful thinking?

6. Do subordinates believe that seniors observe the rules and regulations that they expect subordinates to



follow? How do you know?

7. What do the sailors and juniors think of the willingness to discuss policies, plans, and actions that affect their personal liberties.

8. Do juniors think that seniors are interested in helping with personal or family troubles? How did you determine the feelings in this matter?

9. What do the sailors or junior officers think of the efficiency of the commanding officer, the squadron or division commander, the type commander, and the fleet commander? What plan do you have for discovering this?

10. Do the juniors think the seniors play favorites?

11. Do juniors think they are ably lead? What method do you use to find out?

12. Do juniors feel that seniors resist new ideas of their subordinates without evaluating their worth? Are individuals afraid to present honest complaints to their bosses?

13. Do juniors feel that you understand their needs and desires?

14. Do seniors know how juniors get along with their fellow employees?

15. What do juniors think about seniors living up to promises and expressed policies?

16. What is the Navy's reputation in the community?



Who tells you this? How sure are you of the facts?

17. What do enlisted men's wives think of the Navy?

Have you ever reviewed how you determine this?

18. Does everyone know far enough in advance about serious changes so that they can adjust to them?

19. Do the men think that adequate recreational and educational facilities are available? Did you ever make a survey?

Communications upward cannot be left to chance; spontaneous communications may be unbalanced, a few glaring weaknesses or successes may get all the emphasis. The seniors who rely on spontaneous information alone never have a true picture of conditions, nor do they receive information timely enough to forestall trouble. This, I believe, is one of the reasons for the reenlistment dilemma in the Navy today. A true picture of the actual feeling of the men toward reenlistment did not filter through to the top level command until too late. The present furious action is taking place as a result of history, of actual reenlistment figures, when remedial action should have started at least four years ago.

By far the most effective method of getting the ideas of juniors is sympathetic, intelligent, listening. This apparently lost art has many pitfalls and is complicated. The thoughtful leader must beware of over-simplification



of the analysis of what he hears. Different people on different levels of supervision have entirely different interpretations of the same idea. Action should be taken on interpretation given by the lower level not the manager's or what the manager wishes the juniors would think. When listening to complaints or bouquets, the senior should strive to learn the cause of the information; it is human nature to cover up the real causes of complaints. Experienced seniors know that juniors tell the boss only what they think he wants to hear.

Actions of seniors speak as loud as words. Upward communications may be stopped or encouraged effectively by the actions of the superior such as grimaces, silences, smiles, scowls, a setting of the jaw, a reddening of the face or a stiffening of the body. The senior's attitude must never be condescending if upward communications are to be worth the trouble of listening. Our native concept of the dignity of man and our concept of the worthiness of juniors as individuals demand that ideas be accepted on an equal basis.

Good communications up the line of administration then results in the long range achievement of good leadership, the development and satisfaction of the individual through strengthening of the human need for self-expression and participation, and the crying need for the promotion of



loyalty and respect for the Navy. The immediate rewards to the top command and all commands through the scalar chain of authority are:

1. An improved picture of the accomplishments and feelings of subordinates at all levels.
2. Trouble spots are isolated before a crisis ensues.
3. Effective reporting systems by juniors are established.
4. Better answers to problems are forthcoming from management and responsibility is eased.
5. Management helps easy flow and acceptance of communications down.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Earl Planty and William Machaver, "Upward Communications: A Project in Executive Development", The Development of Executive Talent, ed. M. Joseph Doohar and Vivienne Marquis (New York: American Management Association, 1952), pp. 219-234.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS

In this paper I have emphasized my contention that the Navy can be made an all-volunteer organization again and it is within the grasp of the Navy command, if the reasons for sailors not reenlisting are explored objectively. Certain disadvantages such as, long absences from home, rigorous operating schedules, loss of fringe benefits, and the low pay are detrimental to reenlistment, but the most important incentive for men to get out of the military service is the poor personnel management. Unless the personnel management improves, the chances for a volunteer Navy are very slim.

Changes in physical appearances, in styles, and in designs are apparent, but there are changes in our behavior and temperament that are not so obvious, values and interests also change. Good morale like a good friendship or marriage is not something that can be achieved and then forgotten.<sup>1</sup> Vast changes in values, behavior, and ideas of labor management relations have occurred among the working class.

The big majority of the Navy military managers are unaware that these changes have occurred during and since World War II, because they have been isolated from

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<sup>1</sup>Abraham T. Collier, "Dilemma in Human Relations", Harvard Business Review, (September-October 1955), p. 65.



labor management relations and because of the inherent resistance to change; they hate to see the "good old days" fade away. In conversations with naval officers regarding the reenlistment situation, most will blame the difficulty on some reason over which they, personally, have no control. This is a natural reaction since the human animal has no desire to be linked with a project that is a failure.

A big step in bringing the bosses in line with the sailors would be to substitute democratic leadership gradually for the traditional autocratic type of leadership. This can be accomplished in the same way as public relations was sold to the Navy, by seminars, by emphasizing the democratic ideas of leadership in service schools, and most important, by educating the admirals in command so that they can set an example.

Another step is to introduce to the Navy the philosophy of communications upward as being as important as downward. In my experience in the Navy, I know of very few naval officers who know what communications up are. I must admit that I did not put much thought or time on this phase of management on previous tours of sea duty. The usual attitude toward the brave officer or man is that he is a radical if he attempts to communicate up the chain of command. Very few ideas or complaints are sent up the



chain except when specifically directed by the higher authority. Several years ago when Mr. Eisenhower was elected president there were some loud "rumblings" coming out of Washington about balancing the budget. I was very enthusiastic and decided to take advantage of the article in the Navy regulations that permits a member of the Navy to write to the Secretary of the Navy to suggest measures to economize.

My suggestion was to combine the staffs that issued civilian personnel instructions to the three military services. My suggestion came back disapproved on the grounds that the regulations for civilian personnel in the Navy were not applicable to civilian personnel in the Army or the Air Force in spite of the fact that they were all based on the same manual from the Civil Service Commission. The communications-upward met a cold reception and by the time it reached the Secretary of the Navy there were many many reasons why it could not be done and no encouragement. I still think it would result in a savings.

The third step is to establish some management objectives or aims that can be published and that can be related to the everyday tasks of the officers and men. Everyone should know what the Navy is trying to accomplish. In every war it has been necessary for the President of the United States to establish the aims of the war, but for



some reason or other when peace comes the aims are accomplished and the military service finds itself in a vacuum with no knowledge of what it is really trying to do except as set forth in the mission. The feeling engendered by this can be summed up in the phrase expressed many times, "The men in the fleet think the admirals in Washington don't give a damn about them."

In the final analysis we can't expect to make the Navy a "Utopia", but we can make it better than industry. Our goal should be to make the Navy, by intelligent, alert personnel management, a place where young men will be proud to work and where they will gain satisfaction from their job. This cannot be done by treating 1955 model men like 1945 models.



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